

Most shops generate waste oil and must have procedures to handle that waste properly. Waste oil is regulated as hazardous waste in Massachusetts. In addition to providing information on waste oil regulations, this fact sheet also describes the option of using waste oil for heat.

MassDEP Waste Oil Regulations

Generator status

All shops that generate waste oil must register with MassDEP and include the quantity of waste oil produced when notifying MassDEP of total waste oil generation. Shops may have a separate generator status for hazardous waste and waste oil based on the accumulation of each. However, the following are the generation limits for all three waste oil categories that you must follow:

- **Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG):**
These businesses generate less than 220lbs (approximately 27 gallons) of waste oil per month. VSQGs can also transport waste oil to another business or location for use in a waste oil heater. See below for more information.
- **Small Quantity Generator (SQG):**
These businesses generate between 220lbs to 2,200lbs (or approximately 27 and 270 gallons) of waste oil per month.
- **Large Quantity Generator (LQG):**
These businesses produce more than 2,200lbs or (approximately 270 gallons) of waste oil per month.

Storage

The area in your shop that is designated for the storage of waste oil must be marked, in letters at least one inch high, with "Waste Oil." Generators of waste oil must comply with the same containment requirements as other producers of hazardous waste. Do not mix waste oil with other types of hazardous waste. Keep the drums away from electrical areas.

Spills

If the spill occurs near coastal waters or storm drains, call the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802. Call 911 to report all spills to nearest fire department. Also, if a spill occurs, your shop is required to report any amount beyond 10 gallons of oil immediately to MassDEP at 1-888-304-1133. There is a penalty for failing to report this within 24 hours.

Waste oil collection

Allow used oil filters to drain completely for at least 12 hours after removing them from the vehicle. See the "Oil Filter Can Crushers" page for more information on a mechanized way to collect oil from oil filters. Oily rags are also considered hazardous waste as long as they pass the "one-drop test" and no longer drip oil.

To capture oil from vehicles during maintenance, there are several methods ranging from drip pans to “Vehicle Fluid Evacuation Caddies” (see fact sheet).



This waste oil management system works with waste oil collection caddies (left) that are wheeled from the vehicle to the shop's waste oil storage tank (right). The oil is emptied from the caddies into the storage tank using the hookup (circled in both photos). This waste oil storage tank is close to an outside wall, allowing the pick-up company to empty the tank through the wall (indicated by the arrow). If your shop considers this method, be sure to obtain the correct receipts from the pick-up company if they operate outside your shop's business hours. Note that waste oil containers and funnels must always be closed when not actively depositing oil.

Photos courtesy of Madison Park Technical Vocational High School

Waste oil heaters

If your shop can make use of the waste oil collected from vehicles, this can save money on energy during the winter. VSQGs can also transport the waste oil to another site for use in a heater. If your shop intends to burn waste oil for heat, submit an [On-Site Class A Recycling Notification to MassDEP](#).

Also, shops that burn waste oil as heat must follow the following regulations

- Burn waste oil only between September 15th and June 15th.
- Burn or transport at least 75 percent of all waste oil accumulated onsite during the same calendar year (therefore, keep logs of the waste oil generated, transported, and received).
- Never modify space heaters.

If your VSQG shop transfers waste oil to another location that burns it, you must maintain transport logs that document the dates, quantities transferred, the receiving location's name, address, and hazardous waste generator number, and signatures of receipt for each instance. According to the MassDEP regulations for VSQGs, transport only one 55 gallon drum at one time.

Find Additional Information

Follow the guidelines of these MassDEP fact sheets:

- [Best Management Practices for Automotive Recyclers: Waste Oil, Used Oil Filters, and Waste Oil Space Heaters](#)
- [Safe Handling of Waste Oil for Burning in Space Heaters](#)

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